



The President's Daily Brief

16 November 1970

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THE PRESIDENT'S DAILY BRIEF

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PRINCIPAL DEVELOPMENTS

In Cambodia, Communist forces were active in and near Kompong Cham city over the weekend. (Page 1)

The Soviets have taken a tough position on access to Berlin on the eve of today's four-power ambassadorial-level meeting. (Page 2)

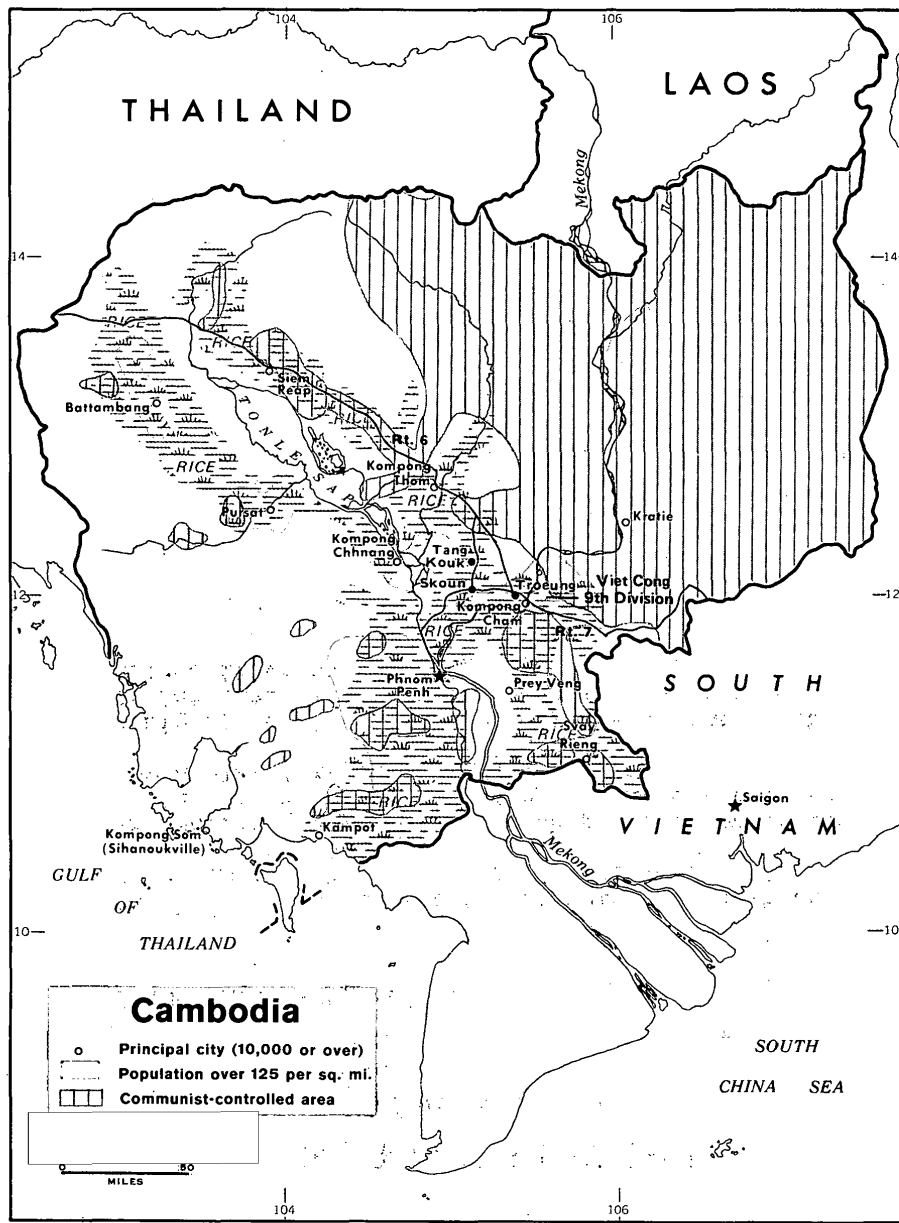
Soviet

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Current Situation



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CAMBODIA

The Communists launched mortar and rocket barrages, followed up by ground assaults, against the airfield and various government defenses in and around Kompong Cham city during the weekend.

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Vietnamese Communist troops crossed the Mekong from the east last week, boasting that they would occupy Kompong Cham by the end of November.

To the west of the provincial capital, enemy forces also struck at government troops both north and south of Route 7, and at two battalions defending Tang Kouk on Route 6. The Cambodian Government, meanwhile, has sent four paratroop battalions to Skoun, at the junction of Routes 6 and 7, with the mission of helping keep Route 7 open as far as the town of Troeung.

The troops involved in the forays against Kompong Cham appear to have included major elements of the Viet Cong 9th Division, which had been located east of the city across the Mekong. Intercepts from the North Vietnamese 174th Regiment, which has been responsible for attacks along Routes 6 and 7, reveal that additional harassments are planned in that area.

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USSR-BERLIN

Friday's working session of four-power advisers on Berlin bogged down over the issue of access, particularly the problem of defining the roles of the East and West Germans in working out specific arrangements. The Soviets rejected a Western draft that would have laid down fairly detailed guidelines for the forthcoming talks between Bonn and Pankow, insisting instead that the four powers should set only very general guidelines.

The Soviet representatives also advised their US colleagues that today's ambassadorial-level meeting would "not be unlike" the session of 9 October, when Soviet Ambassador Abrasimov took an extremely unyielding stance on all issues. The Soviets also contended that the main purpose of a four-power agreement should be to stabilize existing access arrangements, not to improve them.

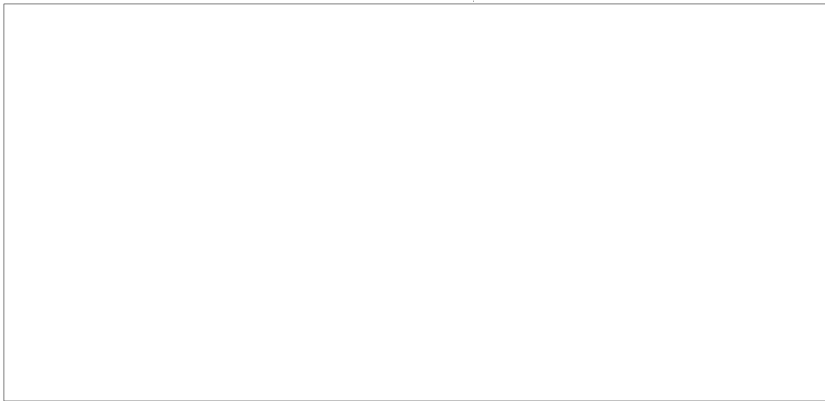
Soviet tactics suggest that Moscow would like the coming talks between Bonn and Pankow to supplant, in effect, the four-power discussions.

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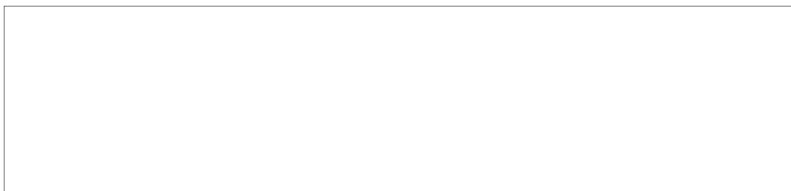
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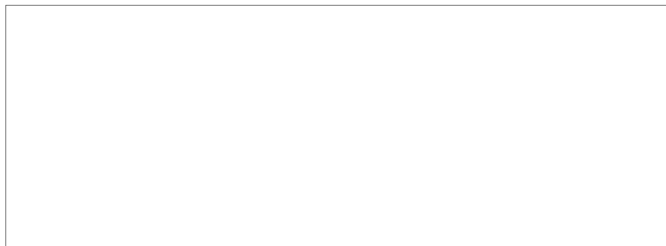
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NOTE

Laos: No significant fighting developed over the weekend except for sharp skirmishing a few miles north of Ban Na to the southwest of the Plaine des Jarres, where Communist guerrillas lost and then regained a tactically important hilltop position. Communist artillery and mortar attacks have slackened considerably, but enemy messages continue to refer to the forward positioning of artillery west of the Plaine. The intercepts also suggest that the North Vietnamese intend to press attacks southwest of the Plaine and are taking measures to remedy supply problems and to strengthen some of their forward units.

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